

MAB 077  
4 August 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Acting Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report--Abidjan Bureau--July 1981

## I. GENERAL

As part of a round of calls made on Embassy officers in connection with my assignment as Bureau Chief, on 3 August I met with Ambassador Rawls and DCM Friedman. Both pointed out the Ivorian Foreign Ministry's continuing interest in the selected file of material the bureau provides to the ministry in French. The Ambassador said she does not regard this service as something of limited value or an FBIS public relations device. She noted that the service is of value to the Mission as a whole in its dealings with the Ivorians.

## II. MONITORIAL/EDITORIAL

1. On 30 July, a small group of leftists seized control of Gambia, with the support of the country's 500-strong paramilitary Field Force. The country's president, Sir Dawda Jawara, was in London at the time to attend the Royal wedding. The rebels immediately captured Banjul airport and the national radio station, and began broadcasting a series of proclamations announcing their intention to turn the country into a dictatorship of the proletariat. Senegalese troops invaded on the 31st at President Jawara's request. Unfortunately, the bureau is unable to monitor Banjul radio, and the Dakar Domestic Service is only audible in the evening. However, AFP has a radio monitoring operation in Dakar, and the agency carried a great deal of valuable reportage on the coup. The bureau has relied on AFP during the day. Dakar radio has carried a wealth of valuable material on the coup during the evening, including two speeches and a press conference by president Jawara (who returned to Dakar the day after the coup), a speech by Senegalese President Diouf, and reports on developments. The bureau scheduled special evening shifts on 1 and 2 August, and has remained open well past normal close-down each evening since the 30th. The coup has developed into a stalemate, with the Senegalese troops in control of virtually the entire country, but the rebels have seized hostages and prolonged negotiations are under way to obtain their release without further bloodshed. So far the bureau has filed some 22,000 words of material related to the coup.

2. Diplomatic sources in Paris reported on 15 July that two explosions had killed four people in a movie theater in Bangui, Central African Republic. Reacting, President David Dacko banned two political parties and suspended a third and subsequently declared a state of seige

throughout the country. AFP's African beams covered the situation thoroughly, including exclusive interviews with Dacko and the leaders of the banned parties. Although poor reception of Bangui during the day limited the bureau's efforts, evening casts carried reports on the presidents's declaration of the state of emergency and the recall of military personnel to their units. Subsequently, reports in the Paris paper LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS, as reported by AFP, accused Angola and Cuba of being behind a plot responsible for the bombing which was described as an 'attempted coup'.

3. On 10 July, disturbances once again broke out in troubled northern Nigeria. Demonstrators in Kano burned the State Assembly, the Kano radio station and other official buildings as well as the homes of various officials in protest of a government query to the emir, the traditional leader, concerning his alleged insubordination to the government. The governor's political adviser was also killed in the melee. Kaduna Domestic Service carried the first report of these events, while Lagos Radio was silent on the subject for more than 24 hours and then played down their significance. In a message to the bureau, the BBC News Bureau noted that the BBC's African Service had advised that the Kaduna Radio report had been the only source of detailed information and expressed appreciation for the bureau's "splendid effort".

### III. ADMINISTRATION

#### Personnel

I arrived in Abidjan on the 10th and replaced [ ] as STAT Bureau Chief on the 16th. Phil and his family left for home leave and reassignment in Headquarters on the 16th.

[ ]

STAT

Chief, Abidjan Bureau

#### Attachments:

1. Monthly Production Report
2. Bureau Coverage Schedule